

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02

USPS-01 OC-05 CCO-00 /058 W
----- 084921

R 182101Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5678
INFO AMCONSUL CALGARY
AMCONSUL HALIFAX
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL STJOHNS
AMCONSUL TORONTO
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS OTTAWA 571

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, CA

SUBJECT: FEDERAL BLUE COLLAR WORKERS INITIATE ROTATING STRIKES

1. AFTER WEEKS OF INCONCLUSIVE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN
TREASURY BOARD AND PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE OF CANADA (PSA)
REPRESENTING 18,600 GENERAL LABOR AND TRADES GROUP (BLT)
ENDING IN CONCILIATION PROPOSAL WHICH WAS REJECTED BY
THREE-QUARTERS OF UNION MEMBERSHIP, PSA GROUP WAS IN
LEGAL POSITION TO STRIKE FEB 14. LAST-DITCH EFFORTS BY
FEDERAL MEDIATOR THROUGHOUT WEEK-END FAILED AND ROTATING
STRIKE BEGAN FEB 17.

2. PRIMARY DISPUTE ISSUE IS WAGES. TREASURY BOARD OFFERED
15.4 PERCENT IN FIRST YEAR AND 10.66 PERCENT IN SECOND
YEAR OF NEW CONTRACT. PSA INITIALLY DEMANDED 42.5 PERCENT
IN ONE-YEAR AGREEMENT WHICH IT CLAIMED WOULD BRING PAY
SCALES TO 90 PERCENT COMPARABILITY WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.
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CURRENT AVERAGE HOURLY RATES ARE C\$4.42. EMBASSY HAS

LEARNED THAT UNION MIGHT SETTLE FOR APPROXIMATELY 33 PERCENT IN TWO-YEAR AGREEMENT. BOTH PARTIES AGREED TO CONTINUING MEDIATION BUT SO FAR NO MEETING SCHEDULED.

3. NEITHER LENGTH NOR EFFECT OF STRIKE DETERMINABLE AT THIS POINT. ACCORDING TO MEDIA REPORTS SOME 11,000 WORKERS PARTICIPATED IN WORK STOPPAGES ON FIRST DAY OF STRIKE (FEB 17). THESE INCLUDED POSTAL EQUIPMENT AND TRUCK MAINTENANCE WORKERS AT OTTAWA AND TORONTO; LATTER COULD AFFECT HALF OF MAIL SERVICE THROUGHOUT CANADA. GRAIN SORTERS AND WEIGHERS WERE OFF THE JOB IN SASKATCHEWAN, EDMONTON AND VANCOUVER AS WERE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF ARMED FORCES BASES IN SASKATCHEWAN, ALBERTA, NOVA SCOTIA, ONTARIO, QUEBEC, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR.

4. SOME 3,600 GLT MEMBERS ARE IN "ESSENTIAL SERVICES CATEGORY" WITHOUT RIGHT TO STRIKE. DESPITE UNION ASSURANCES THAT SUCH EMPLOYEES ARE EXEMPT FROM ROTATING STRIKE ACTION APPARENTLY AIRPORT RUNWAY CLEARANCE WORKERS, WHO ARE CLASSIFIED ESSENTIAL, WALKED OFF JOB YESTERDAY AT WINNIPEG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. SUCH DESIGNATION DID NOT DETER AIRPORT MAINTENANCE WORKERS FROM STRIKING AT SEVERAL AIRPORTS LAST DECEMBER.
PORTER

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